



ENERGY FOR
GENERATIONS
FUND

APPLICANT GUIDELINES 2026

About ESB and the Energy for Generations Fund

As a leading Irish organisation with deep roots in the community dating back to 1927, ESB is committed to addressing key social issues facing Ireland today. The Energy for Generations Fund disburses circa. €1 million per year across a range of community and issues-based initiatives through a bi-annual fund to charities working in the areas of social inclusion relating to access to education, access to employment, and homelessness.

The fund supports actions consistent with our purpose and values, advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and fostering social inclusion in alignment with SDGs 4, 5, 8, and 10 (education, gender equality, decent work, reduced inequalities). Secondary alignment with one of the ESB's UN SDG's 7, 9 and 13 (affordable & clean energy, industry, innovation & infrastructure, climate action) is also encouraged.

The Fund is a pivotal element of ESB's commitment to driving positive social and environmental impact, aligning with the company's [Sustainable Leadership Plan](#)

The Fund also aligns with ESB's vision for Corporate Social Responsibility by stepping forward with purpose—supporting low-income and marginalised communities across the regions we serve, and creating meaningful, positive social impact. Through purposeful CSR initiatives, we connect our people to ESB's strategy and values, empowering them to make a difference. By embedding social responsibility into everything we do, we strive to build a values based, inclusive culture where our people, communities, and society can thrive together.

Who Can Apply?

- A registered charity with the Charities Regulator
- Charities that operate on the island of Ireland or its offshore islands

Ineligible Organisations / Applications

- Individuals or individual fundraisers
- Third-party fundraising organisations
- Overseas organisations/projects
- School applications
- Community counselling services
- Organisations who are not registered charities
- Organisations lacking capacity or track record

Projects must be aligned with one of the following EFG Fund key pillars

1. **Social Inclusion – Access to Education**

- Early years education (literacy, numeracy, transition support)
- Post-primary STEM initiatives
- Adult education (competency development, return-to-education programmes)
- Inclusive education initiatives aligned with sustainability

2. **Social Inclusion – Access to Employment**

- Inclusive employment initiatives supporting marginalised groups
- Skills development and vocational training, especially in STEM and sustainability
- Projects aligned with ESB's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategy (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion)

3. **Homelessness**

- Services and projects benefiting homeless people or those at risk
- Initiatives linked to education, employment, and sustainability

UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Projects should demonstrate primary alignment with one of the following SDGs:

- SDG 4 – Quality Education
- SDG 5 – Gender Equality
- SDG 8 – Decent Work & Economic Growth
- SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities

Projects should also demonstrate secondary alignment with one of the ESB's UN SDGs:

- SDG 7 - Affordable & Clean Energy
- SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure
- SDG 13 – Climate Action

Mandatory Submission Requirements

Applicants must provide:

- Registered Charity Number (RCN)
- Evidence of alignment with one of the SDGs 4, 5, 8 or 10 & secondary alignment with SDG's 7, 9 or 13
- Three proforma invoices/quotes (dated within 6 months)
- Detailed project budget (Excel format, highlighting ESB-funded elements)
- Most recent annual audited accounts or management accounts
- Constitution / Governing Document
- Annual report
- Up-to-date tax clearance certificate (signed by a Director and dated within 12 months)
- Safeguarding policy (if relevant)
- If previously in receipt of funding from the EFG Fund, confirmation that all project reports have been submitted

Eligible Costs

The EFG Fund supports **direct project costs** that contribute to implementing and achieving objectives related to social inclusion and homelessness.

Examples of eligible costs:

- External trainers, facilitators, keynote speakers delivering project activities
- Materials, equipment, or resources directly tied to project delivery

Ineligible Costs

The EFG Fund does not cover general organisational or overhead expenses that are not directly tied to project delivery. Examples of **ineligible costs** include:

1. **Salaries and wages** for administrative for support staff, or executive/managerial
2. **Office expenses** such as rent, mortgage payments, utilities, office supplies, equipment (unless project specific), and furniture.
3. **General overheads** including light & heat, insurance premiums, depreciation, and office maintenance or repairs.
4. **Administrative services** such as accounting, auditing, HR, legal, compliance, IT support, or software subscriptions.
5. **Operational costs** including non-project travel, meals, accommodation, general marketing/communications, and training or professional development for staff.
6. **Miscellaneous costs** such as membership fees, subscriptions, or general fundraising not tied to the specific project.

Funding Exclusions

The Fund does **not** support:

- High-risk ventures (financial instability, unproven approaches, lack of organisational capacity, inadequate risk management)
- Individuals or individual fundraisers
- Third-party fundraising
- Retrospective funding (expenses already incurred)
- Community counselling services
- Mental health crisis intervention or suicide-prevention supports/services
- Schools
- Sports Clubs
- Overseas projects

Risk Management

Projects must demonstrate:

- Financial stability and secured funding sources
- Evidence-based approaches with proven effectiveness
- Organisational capacity and track record in project delivery
- Sustainability beyond the initial funding period

Timeline

The following will give applicants an overview of the timeline for the processing of applications to the notification on whether or not the applications have been successful:

Activity	Approximate time frame
Application portal opens to applications	2 weeks after which the application portal closes.
Step 1 of assessment process – First Fence	2 weeks
Step 2 – applications that pass Step 1 are shared with the EFG Fund evaluation committee	2 weeks
Step 3 – applications that pass Step 2 are presented to the EFG Fund Committee	2 weeks
Step 4 – applications that pass Step 3 are presented to the EFG Fund Executive Board	2 weeks
Step 5 – successful & unsuccessful applicants are advised of the outcomes	2 weeks
Step 6 – cheques released to successful applicants	2 weeks

APPENDIX 1

Information on the relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's)

SDG 4 – Quality Education

The Energy for Generations Fund supports **inclusive education initiatives** that expand opportunities for low-income and marginalised groups. Projects are welcomed that:

- Strengthen **early childhood education**, particularly literacy and numeracy skills.
- Promote **STEM learning** at post primary level, encouraging participation from underrepresented groups.
- Provide **resources, workshops, and mentorship** for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Support **adult return to education programmes**, especially for those long-term unemployed.

By funding these initiatives, the Fund helps build a more **equitable society** where everyone can access education and benefit from lifelong learning.

SDG 5 – Gender Equality

The Energy for Generations Fund supports initiatives that advance **gender equality**, consistent with ESB's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategy and its target for women to represent 30% of the workforce. Eligible projects include:

- **Employment-focused programmes** offering skills development and vocational training for women, particularly in STEM and sustainability.
- **Education-focused initiatives** that promote girls' education, ensure equal opportunities for boys and girls, and challenge stereotypes.

By funding these initiatives, the Fund aims to **reduce gender disparities** and foster a more **inclusive society** where everyone can thrive regardless of gender.

SDG 7 – Affordable & Clean Energy

The Energy for Generations Fund supports projects that expand **access to sustainable energy opportunities** while promoting **social inclusion**. Eligible initiatives include:

- **Education-focused projects** that build STEM skills among marginalised groups, aligned with ESB's Sustainable Leadership Plan.
- **Employment-focused programmes** that train disadvantaged communities in energy technologies, preparing them for jobs in the growing green economy.

By fostering clean energy adoption and equipping people with the skills to participate in the sustainable economy, the Fund advances SDG 7 while also enhancing **equity, inclusion, and opportunity**. This dual focus ensures progress toward a more **sustainable and fair future**.

SDG 8 – Decent Work & Economic Growth (Summary & Improved Version)

The Energy for Generations Fund supports initiatives that promote **inclusive employment opportunities** and prepare marginalised groups for meaningful work. Eligible projects include:

- **Job readiness programmes** such as workshops on interview skills, CV/resume writing, and professional development.
- **Vocational training and skills development** tailored to disadvantaged communities, ensuring access to sustainable employment.
- **Pathways to decent work** that reduce inequalities and strengthen social cohesion by enabling everyone to contribute to and benefit from economic growth.

By funding these initiatives, the Fund advances SDG 8 by fostering a more **inclusive economy**, empowering individuals, and creating opportunities for long-term prosperity.

SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure

The Energy for Generations Fund supports projects that **upgrade infrastructure and foster sustainable innovation**, in line with ESB's Sustainable Leadership Plan. Eligible initiatives include:

- **Retrofitting buildings for energy efficiency**, such as improved insulation, windows, and heating systems, particularly in projects addressing homelessness.
- **Sustainability-focused education programmes**, embedding innovation and environmental awareness into learning.
- **Community-based projects** that strengthen resilience by promoting inclusive and sustainable practices such as community gardens, renewable energy cooperatives, digital literacy hubs, and climate adaptation initiatives.

By funding these initiatives, the Fund advances SDG 9 by building **resilient infrastructure**, promoting **inclusive industrialisation**, and encouraging **innovation** that benefits both communities and the environment.

SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities

The Energy for Generations Fund supports projects that **empower marginalised and disadvantaged groups**, ensuring equal access to education, employment, and participation in society. Eligible initiatives include:

- **Accessibility projects** for people with disabilities (e.g., assistive technologies, inclusive education and employment).
- **Literacy and digital skills programmes** that open opportunities for disadvantaged communities in education and work.
- **Social inclusion initiatives** that reduce barriers and promote equity across diverse groups.

By funding these projects, the Fund helps reduce inequalities and ensures that all individuals, regardless of background or circumstance, can benefit from social and economic progress.

SDG 13 – Climate Action

The Fund supports projects that **combat climate change and its impacts** through community-driven, inclusive approaches aligned with ESB's Sustainable Leadership Plan. Eligible initiatives include:

- **Climate education and awareness programmes**, such as workshops and campaigns that build community knowledge and action.
- **Carbon reduction projects** like tree planting, community gardens, and sustainable agriculture practices.
- **Energy efficiency and sustainability initiatives** that link climate action with social inclusion, education, employment, and homelessness.

By funding these initiatives, the Fund strengthens grassroots climate action, enhances community resilience, and contributes to the global effort to mitigate climate change.